MONTEREY NEWS

October 2005

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The Town

Residents Advised to Prepare for Emergencies

Fire Chief Ray Tryon addressed the Select Board at its first meeting after the Hurricane Katrina disaster. Having watched the situation in New Orleans very closely, Tryon said it was clear to him that safe and expeditious handling of emergencies is based on the chain of command. "You have to work locally," he said. "The only things the state or federal government will do are to send what you've asked for. If you want engineers, ask for them." Tryon believes that Massachusetts has a good system for emergencies. Towns make requests of MEMA (the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency), which forwards them to the governor.

Tryon stressed repeatedly that Monterey residents must learn "Self-survival 101." As he said, "Everyone should have at least a two-week supply of food and water. If the emergency is caused by a blizzard or ice storm, then you'll need some way to heat your house. Not to mention snow shovels." He also cautioned about false optimism for those with generators, warning, "Generators can run out of fuel."

The trauma suffered by the Gulf communities during Hurricane Katrina led Select Board Chair Michèle Miller to request that the Select Board evening meeting on Monday, October 17, be devoted to reviewing the responsibilities of town officials as well as helping residents prepare themselves for an emergency. Miller suggested that the Fire Department offer a first aid class to the town. "If it's requested of us," said Tryon, "we'll do it."

Edie Ross

Wendy Jensen (l) describes her basket-making techniques to some of the 800 people who attended the art show sponsored by the Monterey Cultural Council on September 3rd at the Firehouse Pavilion. Twenty-two local artists were showcased.

Police Department

Chief of Police Gareth Backhaus requested guidance on how to handle continuing complaints against the dog residing at 60 Hupi Road; there have been multiple reports of it biting people.

Monterey hosted a Berkshire County Regional Emergency Planning Commission drill during the week of September 12th. Miller asked Backhaus to review the lines of responsibility in case of an emergency situation, and to present these at the next Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) meeting. Monterey joined the Southern Berkshires LEPC to fulfill the requirements for minimal training and exercises that enable the town to get reimbursed for any kind of serious incident.

Backhaus reported two alarms on Sylvan Road, two on Stevens Lake, and one on Tyringham Road; two lockouts; a speeding complaint on Tyringham Road; a fender bender at the Transfer Station; a false 911 call; a well-being check from Elder Services on Sylvan Road; a motor vehicle accident at the intersection of Tyringham and Lime Rock Lane and another one on Main Road; a drunken driving arrest; and a complaint about the stop signs at Gould and Curtis Roads.

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The *Monterey News* is published monthly under the auspices of Monterey United Church of Christ, Monterey, MA 01245.

Thus far this year Monterey has lost about fifteen road signs to vandals, far more than in previous years. Director of Operations Maynard Forbes reported that Otis is experiencing the same problem. Nostalgia buffs will be pleased to learn that vandalism was not a problem with the old white road signs.

The Select Board's interest in creating a new walkway in the center of town waned after Forbes opined that the crosswalk would not do any good. Moreover, unless tickets will be written for jaywalking, the walkway may be pointless. An additional note of warning came from Select Board member Jon Sylbert, who said that such a crosswalk would open the town to liabilities. The discussion resulted in a decision to ask the owners of the General Store to stripe the area in front of the store to prevent parking there.

After receiving a phone call from a Monterey resident who caught a skunk in a trap, Backhaus told the Select Board that the Police Department puts down animals that appear to be rabid, but if the injured animal is merely a nuisance, a private contractor should be called for appropriate disposal.

Jerry Green, a thirty-year resident of Beartown Mountain Road, appeared before the Select Board to make a formal complaint about speeders on the road. As he said, "Traffic on Beartown Mountain Road is one thing, but speeding is quite another." Noting that Beartown is not the only road in Monterey that attracts speeders, Miller encouraged Backhaus to provide extra enforcement on back roads, particularly in the afternoon as construction workers are leaving their jobs. Subsequently, police officers have been using radar on Beartown Mountain Road and other side roads, with the result of more citations written on a regular basis.

Highway Department

Miller told Forbes that Monterey is receiving a $3700 grant from Massachusetts Technology Collaborative in Clean Energy funds, noting that the money could be used to replace the ballfield lighting with solar panels. Forbes will look into other town areas that could use solar panels, such as street lighting and the interior and exterior lighting of the Town Garage.

Learning that all Monterey town trucks are diesel, Miller asked Forbes if he could begin using biodiesel. Forbes reported that he knows a lot of people are picking up restaurant oil for that purpose.

An excavator was hired for work on Tyringham, Art School, and Sandisfield Roads on September 19. At 11:00 a.m. on Monday, September 12, two bids for the paving treatments of Blue Hill and Gould Roads were opened. Del Signore Blacktop Paving of Troy, New York, won as the lowest bidder at $157,976. The

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courtesy Michael Storch

The Monterey Coffee Club turned out in full official regalia to enjoy the sun on a late summer morning.

work will be done during the last week of September.

Forbes said that Fairview Road had not been touched because it has been so dry, and that Fairview will be taken care of once it rains. Fairview Road resident Larry Klein told the Select Board that the road's condition is a safety hazard, with cars bottoming out and going into gullies. Klein asked why the absence of rain presents a barrier to road maintenance when a water truck accompanying the Highway Department would accomplish the same thing. He also asked about the department's regular maintenance schedule for dirt roads. Miller elaborated on her longstanding suggestion that seeding dirt roads after grading aids long-term maintenance, but noted that her low-tech solution has met with significant resistance.

The state's "footprint" program allows communities to resurface roads that, like Route 23 in Monterey, are considered rural or historic, without following normal state procedures, such as widening.

After learning that the overseers of the Transfer Station continue to report difficulties in getting residents to put their registration stickers on their cars, the Select Board recommended that Forbes put up a sign at the station reminding people of their obligation to display the sticker.

Forbes told Miller that he needs written directions from David Bixby, the architect, or Don Torrico, the Building Inspector, before he begins what one hopes is the final stage of compliance for the Town Hall certificate of occupancy. Torrico gave Miller the punch list, but noted that no one is allowed to work on the building without the architect's oversight.

Confronting the prospect of rapidly escalating fuel prices this year, the town locked in a set price for the three municipally owned buildings (Town Hall, the Library, Town Shed).

Melissa Noe, town secretary, told Forbes that many residents have called asking for direction on the size and placement of the now-mandatory house number for 911 purposes. Forbes said, "If you can see them from the road, they're acceptable. If they can be identified by an emergency vehicle, they're acceptable." Forbes explained that neither the Fire nor the Police Department will be out inspecting the signs, which are required for the residents' safety.

Building Inspector

Building Inspector Don Torrico said that there are over 53 "floating" building permits, including roofing, renovation, and new building. Forty-five are open until the final signoff or certificate of occupancy.

Torrico pointed out that having part-time subinspectors who also have their own businesses is a problem for the building oversight community at large.

After a discussion about zoning bylaws for signage, the Select Board wrote a letter to the Planning Commision reminding them that since they are responsible for signage oversight, they should appoint a

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sign officer to enforce the law. Torrico said that typically towns appoint the building official to act as the sign officer. The Planning Commission is requested to review the signage application form to insure that it explains what is involved in size and location of signs, with directions on how to get permission for them.

The Select Board asked Torrico about a homeowner who is seeking a certificate of occupancy for a renovated house and a renovated separate garage. Torrico pointed out that, as currently furnished, the renovated garage qualifies as living quarters, which requires a second means of egress for safety's sake. The problem could be rectified if the kitchen sink were removed.

Torrico has been appointed to the state Board of Certification of Building Officials, and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Federation of Building Officials. Torrico is handling issues in the order of the date they are received, but he is still unable to meet town demand because the amount he is paid is not commensurate with the time he must put in. He noted the complaints from contractors unable to proceed with their work when he is not available for inspection. The Select Board discussed various ways to recompense Torrico beyond what was approved in the 2005–2006 budget.

Miller announced that she had invited Dean Amidon to meet with the Select Board to discuss his specific concerns over the Building Inspector's budget.

The Select Board is sending a letter to the owners of Half Moon Camp notifying them that they must be in full compliance with the state building code and fire code, and with the Board of Health. The annual certificate of inspection needs to be granted before the Board of Health can issue a permit. Torrico will send the owners a packet of information to help them with compliance.

Board of Assessors

Don Clawson, popularly known as "The Mad Scot," has been hired as the new assistant assessor. The Board of Assessors—Stan Ross, Bob Lazzarini, and Bob Gauthier—and Clawson recently completed a weeklong course at the University of Massachusetts to become certified assessors.

Every property in Monterey will get a drive-by inspection to comply with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) requirement for a revaluation every three years. According to Bob Gauthier, "We're going to stop and take digital pictures of every home that will go into our software program. We'll get the front and back of each house, patios, outbuildings, garages, and if the house is on a lake, we'll get the dock, too." The Board of Assessors, working in pairs, will do the inspections. Gauthier asked residents not to fear this revaluation or the people overseeing it. "We identify ourselves when we come to a property," he said. If the drive-by inspection reveals a discrepancy between what is on the property now and what the past assessors' card shows, there will be a second visit, scheduled by a telephone call.

Massachusetts requires that properties be valued within 10 percent of their market value. Monterey's deviation is 48 percent, in large part a result of the rapid escalation in prices in the last several years. "The state is right over our shoulders," continues Gauthier, "because we have to send in all of our sales plus the field cards for each sale. This isn't necessarily 'bad news' because the higher the property is valued, the lower the tax rate can be."

Gauthier explained that Monterey is divided into three "neighborhoods"—the lake district (Garfield, Stevens, Buel), the Monterey business district, and the rest of Monterey. Market values in one neighborhood do not necessarily impact market values in a different neighborhood.

"Some people are reluctant to see us," says Gauthier, "but this whole thing is about fairness. If we can't do uniform valuations, then there is no fair way to establish an equitable tax rate." Ross said that the woefully inadequate record-keeping of the last decade will result in

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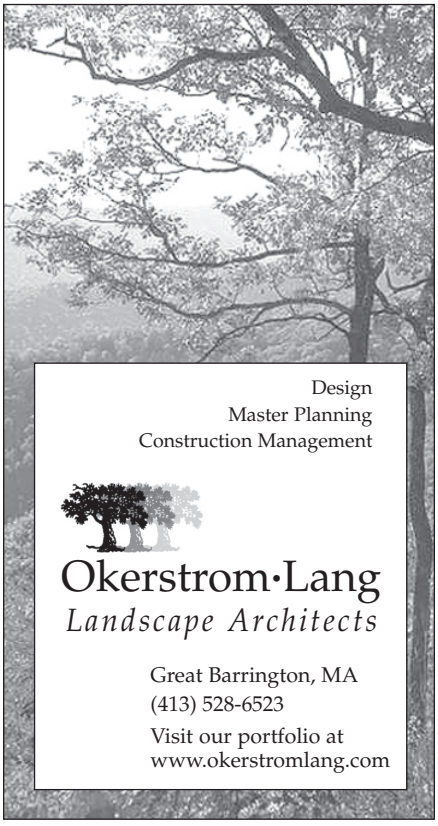

the board going over budget this year. "There are about one thousand houses in Monterey," he said, "and all need to be visited." When asked about going over budget, Ross asked the Select Board to recall that the Assessors are the chief revenue officers of town.

Lake Garfield

Janet Cathcart, president of Friends of Lake Garfield (FLG), told the Select Board that because LakeFest came in under budget, the balance will be used as seed money for next year's event. Cathcart is looking for volunteers to take over management of LakeFest.

Forbes and Conservation Commission member Chris Blair addressed the date and depth of the annual drawdown of Lake Garfield, which had generated some confusion. The drawdown can begin October 1 and must be completed by October 31. Beginning the drawdown on October 1 gives animals a longer time to relocate before winter's onset. Beginning it on October 15 gives an additional two weeks for homeowners on the lake to enjoy it by boat. Blair indicated that "science" is not the basis for when the drawdown begins and thus there are no specific state guidelines for timing.

The three-foot drawdown (performed two out of every three years) is primarily to inspect the dam, to insure flood control, and to help control weeds. The six-foot drawdown (every third year) is primarily for the greater elimination of weeds.

This year there will be a three-foot drawdown beginning on October 15.

Ten years ago Massachusetts state policy opposed lake drawdowns, although Monterey needed drawdowns to inspect the dam on Lake Garfield. In recent years, though, the state began to favor drawdowns, basing its judgment on weed control, animal management, and shoreline cleanup. The state then spent a considerable sum on producing a large generic drawdown application.

Blair suggested that the Select Board hold a public hearing to learn what the specific needs of the town are with regard to Lake Garfield. Cathcart said that FLG is launching a broad educational campaign on appropriate water maintenance and plans to be much more active in getting people to clean up around their docks, which is easier with a six-foot drawdown than with the smaller one used this year. FLG will distribute 250 copies of a book to educate residents on how to promote the health of the lake.

Cathcart said that FLG, in taking on watershed issues, will pay for five signs to be posted in town alerting people to our watershed.

Sylbert reported that chemicals are used to clear the water in Goose Pond and Twin Lakes. Wincing visibly, both Cathcart and Blair pointed out that there are enormous downsides to chemical use, and neither believes this is a sensible course for Lake Garfield.

Monterey will get a list of what needs to be done for dock owners who need new permits. Torrico will provide the Select Board with the necessary information so that it can discuss the issue at 9:30 a.m. at the October 24 Select Board meeting.

Town Accountant

Barbara Gauthier presented the August budget reports to the Select Board. After asking about the disposition of Bally Gally, Gauthier was told that it should be rented on a monthly basis until it is certified for affordable housing. Realtors will be advised of its availability.

Gauthier asked the Select Board to appoint a committee to advise on health insurance, which will investigate the situation for current and retired employees.

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This and That

On September 19, Laura Dubester of Center for Ecological Technology (CET) presented a $3,000 check to the Select Board, a down payment on the $6700

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or more that Monterey won for its high homeowner participation in New England Green Star's renewable energy trust for Massachusetts Electric's "clean energy" program. Three other Berkshire communities—Great Barrington, Egremont, and Williamstown—also met the criteria for prize money.

Noting that electricity is the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, Dubester urged the town to see what else it could do to comply with the Kyoto treaty. The best approach is to set specific goals, but the cost in time and money is often a stumbling block for civic participation.

Practical Solutions, a Great Barrington computer company, was hired by the Select Board to oversee the town's office computers. Their first task is to conduct an audit of all the electronic equipment at Town Hall. Noe will discuss with them the feasibility of establishing a polling capability on the town website.

Debra Mielke of the Finance Committee, brought the Select Board up to date on their proceedings, and asked various procedural questions. She asked for clarification on the procedure for elected officials to be sworn in, and whose responsibility it is to effect the swearing-in process expeditiously. Mielke also noted that Cultural Council grant applications are due by October 17.

Storage of town records is an ongoing concern because currently the records are not in a safe environment.

Michael Storch asked that the town begin charging $2 per copy for the Zoning Bylaw book. And there is an opening for an alternate position on the Zoning Board of Appeals. Interested parties should contact the Select Board.

Carol Edelman addressed the Select Board about her concerns with the temporary driveway in use during the rebuilding of a utility structure on Hupi Road. The Select Board suggested that she meet with the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission to see what they recommend.

— Laurily K. Epstein

The Monterey Sign Bylaw

After receiving complaints about the proliferation of real estate and contractor signs placed off premises, the Select Board and Building Inspector would like to remind Monterey residents and people doing business here of the bylaw regulating signs not requiring permits:

Section VII.A. 3 Signs Not Requiring Permits

a. Temporary signs: No temporary sign shall exceed four (4) square feet in total area or industry standard.

1. A Contractor's sign on project premises only during construction process.
2. Real Estate for Sale or Lease on premises, to be removed within fourteen (14) days after closing date.
3. Signs announcing public events sponsored by civic or social organizations to be displayed for not more than fourteen (14) days prior to event. The Select Board may grant size waivers for these temporary signs.
4. Seasonal Agricultural signs at premises and/or directional locations.

FLG Alerts

Lake Garfield Drawdown

If you own property on Lake Garfield, you will want to take advantage of the drawdown to rake organic matter, such as plants and leaves, from the lake bottom in front of your property. Removing organic matter from the lake will help reduce the level of nutrients that help weeds grow. Best of all, you can use the plants and leaves you rake up as mulch for your garden. Also, lake water is a good fertilizer for lawns and, unlike chemicals, does not promote weed growth in the lake due to runoff.

Friends of Lake Garfield
Ecology Committee

Drawdown of Lake Garfield will begin October 15 and end about two weeks later.

ZBA Alternate Sought

The Monterey Select Board will be interviewing residents interested in serving as a Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) alternate for a five-year period. Anyone wishing to serve in this capacity should contact the town office to arrange for an appointment.

Peter S. Vallianos
Attorney at Law
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Scenes from How's It Made 2005: (Left) Barbara Tryon in her quilting booth. (Right) Frank D'Amato (seated) displayed his acrylics at his booth. (Photos by Edie Ross)

How's It Made? 2005

Local artists, musicians, and culinary experts combined their talents on September 3rd to entertain and enlighten the eight hundred people attending How's It Made?, the Monterey Cultural Council's art show and demonstration at the Firehouse Pavilion. The Cultural Council sends its heartfelt thanks to the many volunteers, including Leonard Weber, John Ryder, Ben Downing, Chuck Mielke, Michael Johnson, the Monterey Piecemakers, as well as musicians John Sellew, Tom Ingersoll, Wicker's Creek, and Jug'lar Vein. The Council also thanks the food vendors: Monterey General Store, Greenhaven Farm, Farm Country Soups, and Gould Farm, and, of course, the twenty-two talented artists who donated their time and skills to participate in this year's event.

The Council sponsors a community event every Labor Day weekend, and How's It Made? takes place every other year. Last year the council hosted Shindig, an evening of music and dancing. These events would not be possible without the generosity of Ray Tryon and the Monterey Fire Company who allow us to use the Pavilion each year. A special thanks goes out to them.

— Dianna Downing
Monterey Cultural Council

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Cultural Council Says Good-by to Chairperson

Because of state regulations, that Cultural Council members can only serve six consecutive years, the Monterey Council regrets that its chairperson, Lois Ryder, has left the council. Lois, herself an artist, has led the council for the past three years. She will be sincerely missed for her steady presence, remarkable leadership skills, and good humor. Thank you, Lois!

Applications Due for Cultural Council Grants

Applications for grants from the Monterey Cultural Council must be postmarked by October 17th to be considered for 2006. Forms and guidelines are available at the Town Hall and online at www.masculturalcouncil.org/applications/ and should be sent to: Monterey Cultural Council, P.O. Box 282, Monterey, MA 01245. In 2005 the Council was able to give funding to twenty of the thirty applications received, awarding a total of $2,000 in grants.

Land Trust Meets Oct. 15

The Monterey Preservation Land Trust will hold its annual meeting on Saturday, October 15, in the basement of the Meetinghouse. The Land Trust will be hosting a presentation on biodiversity at 10:30 a.m. All are welcome.

Valerie Schaff

Roy Blount to Read at Monterey Meetinghouse

The Cultural Council kicks off the fall season with a reading by author-humorist-journalist-screenwriter Roy Blount at the Monterey Meetinghouse on Saturday, October 15, at 7:00 p.m. Blount, well known to listeners of *A Prairie Home Companion* and other NPR shows, is a contributing editor of the *Atlantic Monthly,* writes or has written columns for the *New York Times, Esquire, Oxford American, Atlanta Magazine, Inside Sports,* the *Soho News, Men's Journal, Conde Nast Traveller,* the *San Francisco Examiner, Spy,* and the *Atlanta Journal,* and was a staff writer for *Sports Illustrated.* He is the author of nineteen books on topics ranging from the city of New Orleans to the Pittsburgh Steelers, to Robert E. Lee. He has also written screenplays, including *Larger than Life* with Bill Murray and the HBO fairy tale *The Frog Prince,* and has appeared in a variety of character rolls in films and documentaries. He has been seen on many television talk shows, including *CBS Morning Show, Tonight Show, David Letterman Show, Good Morning America, Today Show,* and *Larry King,* to name a few. Now he will appear in Monterey. Join us for this event which, thanks to the speaker's generosity, is free to the public.

Dual Homeowners Corner

Select Board members Michèle Miller and Michael Storch conducted a very interesting meeting on August 27th for the benefit of second homeowners in Monterey. Their goal was to encourage input from us by suggesting that we attend meetings and express our thoughts. We decided that we should meet both at the beginning and at the end of the summer season, perhaps June 24 and August 26, 2006. The group also thought that we needed to exchange ideas during the year.

Many of us have lived in Monterey for part of the year for up to fifty years. We find more and more reasons to spend more and more time here and therefore consider Monterey to be home as well as our winter residence. For this reason we thought that dual homeowners is a better description of our status and involvement.

This column will be available each month in the *Monterey News*. Please use this space to address questions to the Select Board. 1 have asked Michèle Miller if she would handle the replies.

— Barbara Haver

Green Corner

Save Energy, Save Money and Stay Warm

While the coldest winds of winter are a way off, now is the best time to get your home ready. The largest portion of any utility bill for a typical house is heating and cooling. These tips will help you save energy and money.

Install a programmable thermostat. Turning down the heat for long periods, such as at night or while at work, can make a difference in your overall energy consumption. Every 1-degree setback for eight hours saves 1 percent. That adds up to significant savings.

Perform regular maintenance. Oil-fired systems should be tuned and cleaned every year, gas fired systems every two years. This increases their efficiency and lifetime and reduces repair costs.

Insulate your home. Adding insulation is often the best investment to save energy. Make sure your walls are insulated. With energy prices on the rise, increasing attic insulation may give a 10 percent return on your investment.

Plug leaks and holes. Another easy step is to caulk and weather strip. Seal cool air around windows, electrical receptacles, and pipe and wire entry points.

Your electric company provides rebates to help you make home energy improvements. If you are a Massachusetts Electric Company customer and need additional insulation in your attic or walls, call CET, 413-445-4556 ext 11. CET can conduct a free energy survey to help you determine what is needed and the cost. Western Massachusetts Electric Company customers, call 866-527-7283. For other ideas about saving money and energy this winter, visit www.cetonline.org.

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David McAllester (on right in left photo) led a group in constructing a wigwam based on the Mahican style at the Bidwell House on September 25. Right photo: The finished wigwam. (Photos by Jennifer Scott)

Bidwell House Talk on Berkshire Grave Markers

Jim Miller, local historian and Trustee of the Sheffield Historical Society, will be the featured speaker at the Bidwell House Museum at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 8. His illustrated presentation will be on Berkshire grave markers from 1790 to 1850; this talk was specially prepared for the Bidwell House and will take place in a newly furbished executive office at the museum.

Guests will be given insights into early grave markers and grave carvers in the Monterey and Sheffield regions. A former English and history teacher, Mr. Miller was a board member of the Bidwell House for many years. At present, he is director of the Mark Dewey Research Center at the Sheffield Historical Library and co-chair of a restoration project for Sheffield cemeteries. This project will repair and reset broken or fallen stones, fill settled areas of eleven cemeteries, and clear shrubs from gravesites.

The 1:00 p.m. lecture will be followed by a voluntary group walk to one of the earliest cemeteries in Monterey, the graves of Rev. Adonijah Bidwell and his three wives. Bidwell was the first Congregational minister in the region and built the 1750 Georgian saltbox as a parsonage for the first Meetinghouse in the area. In 1990, under the will of Jack Hargis and David Brush, and with the efforts of Jack Jefferson and Bill Brockman, the home became a museum.

Guests will return to the Bidwell House Museum for cake, coffee, and lemonade as the Bidwell House staff celebrates the birthday of Rev. Adonijah Bidwell. Guests are free to bring a picnic lunch if they wish. Rev. Bidwell was born on October 18, 1716, and died in 1786. The Bidwell House Museum has original sermons written by the minister. During the American Revolution, he voluntarily issued his salary to the town of Tyringham to help pay the soldiers of the militia; he also sold beef to George Washington's army and provided further loans to the town, which he never collected. A veteran of the French and Indian War, Rev. Bidwell was an American patriot of the first order. He was born 289 years ago in Hartford, Connecticut.

Tours of the museum focus on the challenges of living in the Berkshires in the colonial era. For more information, call the museum at 413-528-6888.

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Art Exhibits at Bidwell House

Two Berkshire artists will be featured in early October at the Carriage Barn of the Bidwell House Museum. Visitors are welcome to view the works on display from Thursday through Monday, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. until October 9.

John Maziarz, a well-known Northern Berkshire artist from Adams, Massachusetts, will exhibit sketches, paintings, and collages of a Savoy graveyard. Maziarz is best known for his series on Robert Frost and for his iconographic angels. His work on the graveyard at Savoy memorializes a Quaker resting place in mixed media. Maziarz was artist-in-residence at Mount Greylock Regional High School in Williamstown until his recent retirement.

Zachary Leonard is a young artist who is a graduate of Mount Greylock Regional High School. A mason and diesel-engine expert, Leonard has created steel constructions of nature, particularly flowers, from found metals. His exhibit will be mounted on the lawns of the Bidwell House Museum and will offer an October contrast to the outstanding flower gardens that grace the acreage from early spring through summer.

For further information, please call the museum at 413-528-6888.

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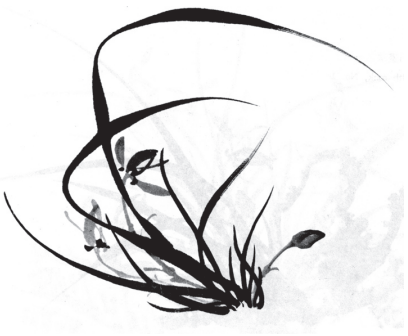

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Library Notes: Interlibrary Loan

Did you know that the 370 public libraries in Massachusetts have over 42 million books, magazines, compact disks, video and audio tapes? The Monterey Library only has about 9,000 items in its collection, but thanks to the Massachusetts Library Commisioners, who set up and fund the regional systems, of which we are a member of the Western Region, any patron of the Monterey Library can tap into those vast resources. In 2004, there were almost 7 million interlibrary loans in Massachusetts. The Monterey Library has been using the ILL system for many years—even Mr. Abercrombie on occasion would get books for patrons. Over the years books have come from all over Massachusetts, from as far away as Oregon and Texas, and once from the Library of Congress.

One result of all the automation that has taken place in libraries is that the ILL system has become more efficient and faster. We have weekly regional delivery, so if you order a book by Saturday night there's a good chance it will be in Wednesday afternoon. Besides books, more people are ordering books on tape and videocassettes. Because those are more expensive, there are fewer copies available, so books on tape and videocassettes can be a little harder to get. We won't know until we try.

One good indicator if any form of material will be available from ILL is to check out the Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing site (http://wmars.cwmars.org/), which has the catalog for libraries in our area. Presently we are not a member of the network (it is an expensive proposition), but we hope to be able to join in the future. In the meantime, if you can find the material you're looking for in the CWMARS catalog, jot down the exact author, title, and ISBN number. Being in the system, chances are good we will get it for you quickly. If you can't find it in CWMARS, you can always use amazon.com to verify the author, title, and the ISBN. We will also be glad to verify the information for you. We can order it immediately.

The Monterey Library can't own every classic or interesting book or tape, but we will be glad to get a copy for you.

Some Recent Acquisitions

Adult Fiction

The Painted Drum, Louise Erdrich
Chill Factor, Sandra Brown
Point Blank, Catherine Coulter
Tyrannosaur Canyon, Douglas Preston
Pirate, Ted Bell
Vanish, Tess Gerritsen
Without Mercy, Jack Higgins
Dog, Michelle Herman
Chill of Fear, Kay Hooper
The March, E. L. Doctorow

Adult Nonfiction

Inheriting the Holy Land, Jennifer Miller
1491:New Revelations of the Americas before Columbus, Charles Mann
Guinness Book of World Records 2006
Natural Cures They Don't Want You to Know About, Kevin Trudeau.

Children

Eldest, Christopher Paolini
Lunch Money, Andre Clements
Tails, Matt Van Fleet
If You Give a Pig a Party, Laura Numeroff
Mercy Watson to the Rescue, Kate DiCamillo
Reflections of a Peacemaker, Mattie Stepanek.

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Monterey, Other Other Towns Win Award for Solar Projects

The Center for Ecological Technology (CET) is pleased to announce that Monterey, Egremont, Williamstown, and Great Barrington are sharing a $10,000 award from CET to be used for solar energy projects in their communities. These four Berkshire towns had the highest percentage of their households make the commitment to support clean energy and choose New England GreenStart. Over three percent of homes in each of these communities currently support clean electricity through their monthly utility bill. These households are collectively preventing approximately 1.4 million pounds of carbon dioxide from being produced each year. Carbon dioxide emissions from generating electricity is the major source of greenhouse gases causing global warming.

In 2003, Massachusetts Electric Company began the GreenUp program to give customers a way to support the development and generation of renewable energy. Those who select a renewable energy option help offset the harmful environmental impacts of electricity generated from coal, gas, and nuclear energy. CET is working with individuals, activist groups, communities, and businesses to encourage hundreds of households across western Massachusetts to support clean energy. CET established the award to generate enthusiasm and participation in its renewable energy offering New England GreenStart, which is available to Massachusetts Electric Company residential and small business customers. The award is funded through a grant from the U. S. Department of Energy.

Both Monterey and Great Barrington will receive $3,000 and Williamstown and Egremont will each receive $2,000. CET's award is in addition to funding from Clean Energy Choice, a program of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC). Clean Energy Choice matches 55 percent or more of a households' New England GreenStart payment with grants for community renewable energy projects. In addition, towns where 3 percent of households participate will receive a bonus of $50 per enrolled household. West Stockbridge, Sheffield, Lenox, and Stockbridge are on their way to achieving this milestone.

Michèle Miller of Monterey's Select Board said, "The Town of Monterey is grateful to those households whose participation in New England GreenStart have earned us this award. It's gratifying to think of the thousands of pounds of carbon dioxide we haven't put into the air. We look forward to putting this award to work making Monterey an even more energy efficient town. We hope to increase the number of participating households as people start to realize that they really can make a difference."

Residents throughout the Berkshires are taking steps to support clean energy. By choosing to pay a little more, they are supporting electricity powered by the sun, the wind, low-impact hydropower and energy captured from landfill gas. In a time of tight municipal budgets, communities receiving awards have a unique opportunity to decide how to best spend their money. Towns can use the funds to install solar electric (photovoltaic) panels on a public building, put up solar lighting, or purchase a portable solar panel to power varied community events. CET will help the town conduct a site assessment and select a viable solar project.

In western Massachusetts, CET is offering GreenStart in partnership with its supplier, the Mass. Energy Consumers Alliance. GreenStart costs an additional 1.2 to 2.4 cents per kilowatt hour. Through MTC's Clean Energy Choice program, at least 55 percent of the payment is tax-deductible from federal taxes for those that itemize. GreenStart supports renewable energy generated in New England, including solar electricity from systems installed on the Williamstown Elementary School, Williams College, Conte Community School, McCann Vocational Technical School, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, Gould Farm, and Simons Rock College.

For more information about Clean Energy Choice, please visit www.cleanenergychoice.org. To learn more about New England GreenStart, visit www.cetonline.org, call Raya Ariella at 413-445-4556 ext 17, or email raya@cetonline.org.

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The Sybil

"Old Granny Larkin had age by the toe
and hollering for help.
She just shriveled up a little
every year with them boiling-downs.
Her watery grey eyes
went on and off like a light
depending on the kind o' day it was
for her.
Her white hair kind of exploded
off her head — like it had a life all its own
and I mind, as a little girl
watching it raise up and move
this way and that
with her thinkin'.
She was so old not a body 'round
knew about her young times.
She must o' been born old
like a owl.
Anyways, some do recollect
about the sayings.
Story is that Abe Larkin
got hisself killed in the war
and left Granny with nary a hen
nor a chick.
Seems she took off in her sorrows
to the hills nigh on twelve days.
Then one morning sun-up
she come down, her clothes ripped
her face streaked
and her feets all swolled up.
She fainted over by the stream yonder.
They carried her into her house, my ma told
and washed her good and gave her food.
then they set her on a milking stool
in the kitchen with her feets in a tub
o' potioned hot water.
That very time it began.
She took a fit, they say, and started swayin'
and croonin', and her eyes
they rolled right back to the beginning o' time.
She sang and talked in foreign tongues.
The preacher done come
and said it was the devil talking in Egyptian
but they got another
and he said it was the finger of God
on her soul and she was talkin' Greek.
You know, both o' them men
went to their graves long since
in disagreement.
After a while, she got to talkin'
so's we could hear, and she'd say:
(Ma used to repeat it over and over)
she'd say: I have seen the dark faces
of death and trouble, but the egg is yet
full of light, and the generations
will harvest the tears of men
and call them seed — *and stuff like that.*
They got a body to write them down
after she took the habit
but it was hard, don't you know
to tell when the spells would take her.
Mostly it was every time
she soaked her poor feets
and she had plenty foot trouble.
Sometimes folks on hard times
would go to her in the night
and they'd set in the kitchen
cozy as you please
and she'd put them parboiled feets
o' hers in the basin o' hot potions
and the sayin's would come.
Some o' them was mighty good sense
about cows' calving
or when not to plant the corn,
but others was
plumb crazy — sounded like black holes
openin' in the earth's memory.
Fair gave folks the willies.
They'd leave her a pie, mind you, or mebbe two bits.
On reg'lar days, Granny Larkin
fussed around the house puttin' up pre-serves,
or she'd take her stick and walk real slow
down the hill to Sam's grocery, same as anybody
carrying an old string bag.
She was real kindly-like. Not even kids
made any fun of her.
She only spoke to me once directly.
My ma had thought I was ailin'.

Granny sat there on a summer's night
starin' into space
her old dress up over her skinny
knotted white and blue legs, and her purple feets
in the basin. She said:
Orpheus is looking for yet another voice.
Well, I don't rightly know the feller
but I reckon he'll have to keep lookin'
cos I don't know nothin' about singin'.
'Course when Granny Larkin passed on
it was all over.
but, you know, lately the kids goes up
where her house use' to stand
and they gathers old mallow hemp
and chaws it
and puts their feets in the stream
they calls it Granny Larkin's Basin
My own Billy says it makes you
feel real good.
I figure they's no harm
though, I tell you, I ain't exactly sure
about the Chandler girl.
Twelve years old, and she took a fit
jest the other day
drinkin' sars'parilla
with her feets in the stream.
Just a act, prob'ly, though it don't
sound a bit like Sybil Chandler
to say:
Under the stars of the morning
with a holding of hands,
stranger with stranger,
the dances of wisdom
and the laughter of peace
will rejoice the day!
No Chandler never talked like that
leastways not since I been around."

— A. O. Howell

To the Victims of Katrina

We see your faces
but can't imagine your pain.

We feel helpless when we hear you
crying out in vain.

We ask ourselves what can we do to help.
The task seems overwhelming.

We say our prayers
and hope that is enough.

And wonder how this could have happened
in America while they spend billions
to fight a war on foreign ground.

We all remember 9/11
And in our hearts you won't be forgotten either.

— Jennifer Scott

drip

drip
drip
drip
drip
drip
helpless helpless helpless
old glacier receding
even this bloody war
and this life of flowers
even you, dearest,
mother of the world

—R. Zukowski
(for Ma & Susan)

Sigrid Estrade/Farrar, Straus & Giroux

Who's Who in Monterey
George Packer

George Packer is an award-winning writer and journalist who divides his time between Brooklyn, New York, Monterey, and whatever infested swamp or bleak desert warzone he is currently covering. He likes to write from his cabin in the woods in Monterey, where he can stoke the wood stove and focus on telling the story: the story of the war in Iraq, or of the civil war in Sierra Leone, the story of the strife in Nigeria, or of the many marginalized people and places comprising the complicated world of international events. Packer is un-embedded, on the ground, and he is fiercely driven to tell the stories of the people who are living the news. His work in the *New Yorker* magazine is in-depth and nuanced in a way that is almost extinct in the sound-bite-driven, prepackaged pap that currently passes for journalism. He is a conscience in a conscienceless world. His recent book on the Iraq war, *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq,* has just been published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

George Packer has an easygoing manner and a kind of sunny good looks that encourage people to open up to him—a characteristic that no doubt comes in handy in his profession and is perhaps a result of the West Coast culture that was his childhood environment. He grew up in Stanford, Califiornia, in the 1960s in the midst of an intellectually and politically active family. His father, Herbert, was a law professor and vice-provost at Stanford University, and his mother, Nancy, was director of the creative writing program at Stanford. His sister Ann Packer, a year and a half his senior, is a novelist whose most recent book is *A Dive Off Clausen's Pier*. Along with the usual kid interests of collecting frogs and building forts, George had a front-row seat for the Stanford student strikes and the protests of the war in Viet Nam. From the beginning he was immersed in political consciousness; his parents were political people, and the student unrest, the presidential campaigns, the struggle for civil rights, the assassinations of President Kennedy, Martin Luther King, and Bobby Kennedy—it was all happening in the world and discussed at the dinner table.

Packer describes Stanford during his childhood as more rural than it is now, with plenty of dirt piles to climb and caterpillars to catch. He attended public schools, where he was interested in basketball, studying books and plays, and writing his own poems and stories. It was also the beginning of Silicon Valley, where the two Steves—Jobs and Wozniak—of Apple Computer fame, and smart kids were changing the world by building cool stuff in their garages. Packer relates how some of his high school classmates went on to cash in on the computer revolution, becoming millionaires essentially overnight. George went to Yale University, headed toward a degree in literature. He said that his writing in high school and college was not a great success and that he forced himself to give up the idea of being a writer. He thought perhaps he might work toward a professorship at a university. After receiving a degree from Yale, Packer, like so many of the best and brightest, joined the Peace Corps and served in Togo, West Africa, as an English teacher, in 1982 and 1983.

When Packer returned from Africa he was disoriented, living in Boston and working construction jobs. During that time he also volunteered in a homeless shelter and wrote essays based on his personal experiences and revelations. His first serious writing was a novel called *The Village of Waiting,* based on his experience in the Peace Corps. The book was a critical success and is affectionately known amongst Peace Corps alumni as the quintessential Africa meltdown story. Shortly thereafter he got a job at Harvard University teaching freshman English. After that Packer, based in Somerville, Massachusetts, got a few more teaching gigs (Bennington, Sarah Lawrence, Columbia) and wrote two novels, *The Half Man* and *Central Square*. At the same time he was writing scores of articles for various magazines: *Mother Jones, Dissent, The Nation, Harper's,* and the *New York Times Magazine*. Yeah, that's why his name rings a bell.

In the summer of 2000 Packer made the big move to New York. Actually, it was a normal move that turned into a big move—career-wise that is. His latest book, *The Blood of the Liberals,* had just

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been published, and "suddenly" George Packer was a major contributor to some of the top publications in the country. He had a story in the *New York Times Magazine* about the controversial criminal lawyer Lynne Stewart, who defended Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, the blind Egyptian cleric accused of conspiring to bomb several sites around New York City. There were articles in *The Nation,* and stories in the *New Yorker*. Having achieved rock star status among "the chattering classes," twenty years of writing paid off; Packer felt confident that he knew how to write and had found his voice. He had traveled a lot, written four books, and was solidly at the top of his profession. In May 2003 he signed on as a staff writer with the *New Yorker,* which he describes as a one of the few magazines that wants a full representation of reality and "never puts its thumb on the scale at all. They really want a well-told story."

Packer has been to Iraq four times. Many readers of the *Monterey News* also read the *New Yorker* (one time on the upper west side of New York I counted five Monterey dump stickers!) and are familiar with his work. He has recounted the steady deterioration of Iraq, the increasing restrictions, and the decreasing number of people available to talk with. He expresses his admiration for (most of) the Iraqi people and has a particular fondness and respect for the interpreters and guides who have helped him. He points out that these brave Iraqis literally put their lives on the line for him and other media people who need their help in getting their stories. He readily admits that there are many scary situations and that his interpreters could easily make a pile of money by turning him over to militants who would happily hold him for ransom or worse.

Packer said that his first trip to Iraq for the New Yorker, in the summer of 2003, was when he got his best take on the place. He met a psychiatrist, was able to talk to young women, and was able to be in public and on the roads much more. Now all that is impossible.

His new book, *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq,* was written in Monterey last winter. Packer said that the snow and the winter helped him write and, thank God, he finished the book just as mud season was beginning. He loves Brooklyn and New York for the great energy they provide and describes the city as a "factory of journalists." He loves Monterey for the natural beauty and because it has fewer distractions and is "a great place for thinking and writing." In addition to writing, George spends time in Monterey with his girlfriend, Laura Secor, an accomplished writer in her own rght (that's another article). He also likes to walk his dog, Fred, and cross-country ski.

Although he is finished with his book, Packer is not walking away from Iraq. "There is too much happening. I have friends there now, our soldiers are there, and I am interested in the people and in the society that is being formed. Also, I'm inspired by the bravery of the people I meet. They are living out on the edge of danger and hope. There are some great people in Iraq, which is why I go back. It's not all butchery and beheading."

With the advent of his latest book, Packer has a formidable book tour scheduled for the next few months. When asked if he would be willing to give a talk on his book at the Meetinghouse in Monterey he answered "Sure!" with enthusiasm. As usual, we in Monterey are incredibly lucky for our talented and generous community, be it local, national or international. Pick up a copy of *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq* and keep your eye out in the Monterey News for specific information about what is sure to be a captivating talk.

— Maggie Leonard

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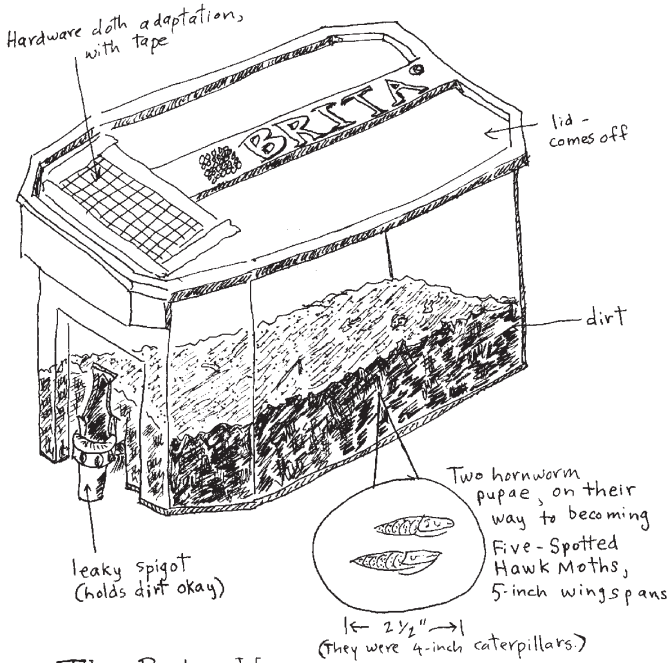
Harboring Hornworms

To some people a tomato hornworm is just another caterpillar: green, eats leaves, has six real legs right up by the front end and a bunch of stubby ones farther back for humping along, turns into a very different sort of adult by and by. Adult lays eggs somewhere, eggs hatch into little green caterpillars, and there you have it, starting all over again.

Other folks live in awe and dread of tomato hornworms. When faced with one they screw up their faces and say, "Ugh. Those are really nasty. My girlfriend had them in her garden once. Kill it, quick." Or, even lacking personal experience with the creatures, they still will say, "Oh My God! I have never seen such a big caterpillar in my life! What is that thing on the end???" These people may not want to touch a hornworm, but they are stronger on the awe than on the dread. They may stick around the hornworm long enough to learn something.

I have been sticking around a couple of hornworms for about two months, learning all the time. But before I tell all the teeniest details, I will come right out and confess that the very first one I saw in my garden this year I dispatched with all the dispassion (and one little prayer, thanks to a visitor who was on the scene) normally addressed to, say, potato bugs. I knew what it was and I knew I didn't want it in my tomato plants, simple as that. It was about half-grown, not truly awesome, just another tomato-loving being like me, only smaller. I think my friend was surprised at how quickly I made mulch of the two-inch body.

The next time I got near a hornworm was about three weeks later when I noticed some major defoliation at the top of a five-foot tomato plant. So far, the deer in my neighborhood have been much more interested in beans than tomatoes, so my interest was piqued. A closer look revealed major bites taken out of half-sized green tomatoes. If you had a tomato-eating pony, you would figure the fence was down somewhere.


Hardware cloth adaptation, with tape
BRITA
lid - comes off
dirt
Two hornworm pupae, on their way to becoming Five-Spotted Hawk Moths, 5-inch wingspans
leaky spigot (holds dirt okay)
← 2½" →
(They were 4-inch caterpillars.)
The Brita Hornworm Habitat

Then I saw the frass. Frass is a word I just learned today on the Internet in an article on tomato hornworms. Frass is what comes out the rear end and piles up on the plant below and on the ground. In the case of, or from the rear end of, a full-grown hornworm, frass is sizeable and noticeable. In fact, many people spot it before they spot the hornworm, even though the hornworm is as big around as my index finger and four inches long.

The secret of the disappearing hornworm is its eight fantastic white chevrons along the sides. These break up the basic green background in such a way as to make the creature vanish in tomato foliage. The angles are just like those of the veins on tomato leaves, and the accents of white and black (plus a few spots) are so effective that even when I knew I had a four-inch fat caterpillar on a certain plant, I could not spot it! My plants are not all that complex because I prune them and string them up. I can walk all around them peering this way and that and still not find the hornworm. I can be staring at piles of frass, defoliated tops, and green-tomato pony chompings. Once I went back to the house for reinforcements, another pair of eyes. We still had trouble.

That is the first miracle of the hornworm: its patterns, which are not only breathtakingly gorgeous (I think, and I am not alone in this) but also work a practical magic. You could be a spy, or a Harry Potter character, and you would envy the hornworm.

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The next miracle is the one common to all insects: metamorphosis. After returning my first hornworm to the earth, I put the next two in a big jar with tomato leaves. They went through periods of napping, during which I fretted over their health, and periods of extreme feasting. I began to wonder if I would defoliate the tomato plants myself, just feeding the hornworms in the kitchen.

Then suddenly they quit for good, first one and then the other. I blamed myself. I'd removed them from their proper habitat, from the dewy mornings and the sunny breezes of the garden. They were depressed and could not eat. They would suffer and die on my watch. The only humane thing I could do now was kill them and hope to be forgiven for having tortured them. Fortunately, I decided to read about them first. I learned that they do not make a cocoon or a chrysalis, like some caterpillars. They drop to the ground and burrow down about 5 inches. Then they form a pupa right there in an "unlined cell." This was it: I had to kill them, put them back in the garden so they could do their thing, or else give them dirt.

I gave dirt. I found a clear plastic container, a rip-off of a water filter with a spigot that leaked even though I had messed with it and replaced its gasket. I took it to the garden, scooped dirt into it, and offered it to the hornworms. Even though they looked pale and sickly, they immediately burrowed into the dirt and vanished. I stuck a couple of pieces of straw in to show where they'd gone down, and in a few seconds the straws were waving as the tunnelers motored by.

Twice I have gently dug around to monitor progress. The first time I found a dormant yellow-brown creature that did not at all resemble the glorious hornworm I'd once known. The next time, which was yesterday, I found a deep brown pupa with no legs, with a segmented-looking abdomen, and with a hint of wing formation in its casing. It could still wiggle in protest, so I gently put it back. Its "unlined cell" is a shambles, but at least it is in the dirt.

I may have ruined everything. The Brita Filter Hornworm Habitat sits in a prominent place on the kitchen counter, ready for whatever happens next. From my reading, I expect that sometime in the spring a grey moth with a five-inch wingspan will emerge, presenting me with my next moral dilemma. If I let it go, the Garden Militia will be all over me for harboring. Plus I'll have more of the tomato-eating pony problem next year. I could kill it and pray, hoping it's okay that I didn't just do this in the first place.

I have a few months. What I am hoping for is a local vet who can do spay/neuter surgery on a big moth. Failing this, I hope to develop an automobile that runs on frass.

— Bonner McAllester

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Sculptor Catherine Bohrman in Stockbridge

Once again the century-old artist's studio used by three generations of one family, will be open to the public October 1st and 2nd. It has become an annual event. The first weekend in October, in memory of stained glass artisan Fred Leuchs, who died in 1999, his daughter, a sculptor, will be working in his studio at 3 Lukeman Lane in Stockbridge. It is a small studio near the intersection of Route 102 and Route 183 built in the early 1900s by sculptor Augustus Lukeman and patterned after nearby Chesterwood. The sculptor Daniel Chester French was both Lukeman's mentor and associate. The studio has been in continuous use as an art studio by the same family for almost one hundred years, first by Augustus Lukeman, then by stained glass artisan Fred Leuchs, and now seasonally by sculptor Catherine Leuchs Bohrman.

The studio is undergoing restoration, but one can view Catherine's sculpture models beside stained-glass works of her late father, as well as maquettes of Lukeman's sculptures.

Catherine Bohrman grew up in Monterey. On the weekend of October 1st she will be working on plaster models at the Lukeman Studio. The public is invited. For more information please call 413-528-0244.

Backyard Bears

When we travel around the country and I tell people that we live in Monterey, not everyone knows exactly where that is. As soon as it is established that it is in the Berkshires in western Massachusetts, the usual comment is that it is beautiful country and near a number of cultural attractions. But what really seems to impress many people is when I tell them we sometimes have black bears at our birdfeeders in our backyards.

John Doelman who lives below Dry Hill on Hatchery Road has had his feeders smashed to smithereens so many times he now suspends them high up by ropes over tree limbs. One morning he came out of his house and saw a huge bear with one paw on the rope shaking the sunflower seed out of the feeder. When John brought out his camera to capture this on film, the bear bared his teeth and growled his disapproval, not more than twenty feet away, as if to say, "Leave me alone, I'm busy."

Jules Dahlman who lives a short distance from town on Tryingham Road, has had the poles for his feeders bent out of shape on a number of occasions, He has a friendly garage mechanic who is well experienced in straightening them out. Almost every spring the big sow that hibernates somewhere in David McAllester's swamp awakens with a great hunger and pays a visit to the Bidwell Road neighborhood, including my backyard. It gets to be expensive. I am told that once bears get a snack from a feeder, they will come back for years, having memories like elephants.

This past summer, Katherine Roberts and Janet Cathcart were taking a walk on Bob's Way (a wonderful trail almost across from Hupi Road and Route 23, given in memory to Bob Theriot and Dave Cathcart) when up ahead they heard Katherine's dog barking and raising a ruckus about something. Upon investigation, they saw in a tree what appeared to be a raccoon, but then recognized it as a bear cub. Most bears will run away from a barking dog, but both walkers quickly turned for home. A few weeks later Katherine was driving into her driveway and saw another bear going into her garage to the garbage pails.

Last year, Roger Tryon and Cathy had come home from grocery shopping after dark, and after bringing in the purchases one bag seemed to be missing. The next morning they found a trail of wrappings leading from the back seat of their car into the woods. Several years before that a resident on Harmon Road called the Wildlife Officer because a bear had been in their screened porch at the pet's dishes and refused to go away, in spite of loud noisemaking. Even then the bear stood at the edge of the lawn, until the officer prepared to fire a warning shot and put a shell in his gun. The bear's ears went up at the action of the gun mechanism, and it quickly turned tail and went off.

Dale Duryea tells me he has seen a huge bull moose standing in his way near New Marlboro Road, and Ken Basler says the beavers have dammed up a large section of Rawson Brook near Diane's Trail, making a river out of that section. So bears are not the only species of big game that inadvertently give the appearance of throwing their weight around by doing what comes naturally.

My nearest year-round neighbor, Henry Wolfer's son Tooky, complains about the flock of wild turkeys that posture themselves against their own images in his

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picture window and poop all over his lawn. However, the whitetail deer that stand on their hind legs to reach the apples of his orchard also invade my vegetable garden to share the autumn harvest of the fruits of our summer labors.

Does the behavior of bears, beavers, moose, or marauding deer bother me very much? Quite the contrary; this is my kind of country, and I rejoice in the fact that not everyone knows where Monterey is.

When the seasonal sun goes down on October 30th, the end of daylight saving time, it will get dark at least an hour earlier by our turned-back clocks. In our own backyards, the hummingbirds and bats will have been gone for at least two weeks, and the finches, chickadees, and wrens will be engaging in a feeding frenzy to stock up before the first hard frost. If I could turn back the environmental clock to benefit wildlife, I would gladly do so. And the next evening, October 31, is Halloween, so it may be for trick or treat time at our feeders, especially if you are a hungry bear. So I guess I will put them away in the shed, just in case.

— George Emmons

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Hazardous Waste Collection

A Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection is planned for fifteen South Berkshire towns on Saturday, October 15, from 9 a.m. to noon, at the Great Barrington transfer station, Route 7, across from Monument Mountain High School. Residents from the towns of Alford, Becket, Egremont, Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox, Monterey, Mount Washington, New Marlborough, Otis, Richmond, Sheffield, Stockbridge, Tyringham, and West Stockbridge may bring household hazardous products for safe disposal or product recycling. The program is free to residents of participating towns. An appointment is required.

At this collection, televisions and computers will be accepted for a fee of $10 and up (depending on size). Also accepted will be grill-sized propane tanks (20 lb.), $2 each, and fluorescent lamps for no extra fee. Cell phones and ink-jet cartridges are also being accepted at no cost.

Most products that have labels that state "caution, toxic, poison, flammable" can be brought to the collection and should not be discarded in the trash. Paint thinners and solvents, pesticides, gasoline, and drain cleaners are examples of acceptable items.

Products that contain mercury, such as fever thermometers and button batteries, found in watches and hearing aides, are accepted. Rechargeable cell-phone and tool batteries are accepted as well. Alkaline batteries can be disposed of in household trash.

The average American household generates approximately 20 pounds of hazardous waste each year. Proper disposal reduces air and water pollution and helps to protect public health and the environment. Those who participate will also be offered information about how to use less toxic products in and around the home.

Latex paint will not be accepted. Empty or dried up cans of latex paint can be disposed with the regular trash. Empty cans of oil-based paint, stains, and solvents can be disposed with the regular trash as well.

Residents who bring mercury fever thermometers can receive one free non-mercury replacement. A broken fever thermometer can cause health problems when one inhales the mercury vapors or when the skin is exposed. Mercury can cause environmental and other health problems if it is thrown into the trash. The Department of Environmental Protection is providing the digital thermometers . It is important to package the glass thermometers so they do not break.

To make an appointment, or for information about what can be brought to the collection, go to http://www.cetonline.org/Events/events.htm#comprehensive, call CET at 1-800-238-1221 ext. 14, or e-mail amyj@cetonline.org.

Tax Bills Due Nov. 1

Monterey real estate and personal property tax bills for the second quarter of fiscal year 2006 have been mailed and are due by November 1. Payments may be mailed to Monterey Tax Collector, P.O. Box 241, Monterey, MA 01245 or dropped off at the Town Hall. The Tax Collector's office hours are Tuesday and Saturday mornings from 9:30–12:30.

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Edie Ross Photos Featured at Gould Farm Benefit

Gould Farm held a benefit event in late August at the Mill River home of Alex and Adele Holman featuring the works of noted Berkshire photographer Edie Ross (in photo above, at the exhibit). Mrs. Ross's artistic works include a "Barns of New England" portfolio as well as other color and black and white pictures conveying the inspirational beauty of the Berkshires. Proceeds from this event will benefit Gould Farm, a Monterey-based unique therapeutic residential community for adults coping with mental illness.

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Pianist Frederick Moyer at Sandisfield Arts Center

On Saturday, October 8, at 8 p.m., pianist Frederick Moyer will give a concert featuring works of Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn and others at the Sandisfield Arts Center. Tickets are $15 at the door.

Moyer's twenty-year career has taken him to forty-one countries and includes the stages of Carnegie Hall and Tanglewood. His enthusiasm, exacting artistry, and adventurous programming have made him a favorite among audiences of all ages. In recital, a delightful commentary from the stage brings the audience into the heart of the musical experience. In one of Moyer's nineteen recordings, he teams up with British baritone Benjamin Luxon in "Enoch Arden," a melodrama for speaker and piano with poetry by Alfred, Lord Tennyson and score by Richard Strauss. Luxon, who now lives in Sandisfield, thinks that what is unusual about Moyer is his incredible versatility.

Frederick Moyer is also well known for his residencies that combine major performances, master classes, workshops, school performances, and other activities to promote classical music within communities. His activities have been supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities, the Concert Artists Guild, and the US-China Arts Exchange among others.

The Sandisfield Arts Center is located on Hammertown Road off Route 57 in Sandisfield. For reservations, call 413-258-4100. For directions or information, visit www.sandisfieldartscenter.org.

Community Potlucks Begin Again Nov. 9

The 2005–6 community potluck dinners will take place on the second Wednesdays of each month, beginning in November and continuing through May. The dinners, a long-held tradition in Monterey, are organized by volunteers and are open to anyone wishing to attend. Everyone brings something to share for the meal, and afterward there is a speaker or entertainment of some kind. The meal begins at 6:00 p.m. and we close the evening around 8:00. In November Richard Edelstein will speak about his work at the Museum of Natural History's Rose Planetarium.

There will be a short organizational meeting for the potlucks in the Church community room on October 12 at 7:30 p.m. Anyone willing to volunteer to help organize the dinners and plan the programs is invited to join us. If you are looking for a way to volunteer in Monterey, this is an opportunity that is rewarding, yet requires only minimal and occasional effort. If you have questions, call Dianna Downing (528-3381) or Steve and Sally Pullen (528-9243).

Save these dates: November 9, December 14, January 11, February 8, March 8, April 12, and May 10.

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Hurricanes and Helping

To the Editor:

I have lived in Monterey for over nineteen years and before that in New York City. I was born in Mobile, Alabama, and grew up in and around that area of the Gulf Coast. No matter where I have lived, something always pulls me—at least once a year—to my "home" on the Gulf Coast. Since September of last year I have been driving the 1600 miles from Monterey to Perdido Bay and then back again, spending about eight months down south. Perdido Bay is the small bay that was on all the weather maps this time last year showing where the eye of Hurricane Ivan passed. My friends and family across the country watched in horror along with me and my family as it homed in right over our little community down there. My grandparents' home and property that are now my responsibility suffered enormous damage and will never be the same in my lifetime. My parents' home several miles up the road also suffered damage, and my stepfather's illness worsened as a result and he passed away several months after. We have not fully recovered in our area of the Gulf Coast and must continue repairs this winter.

The shock of Hurricane Katrina is obviously even worse. New Orleans is about three hours from my grandparents' old cottage and is our "city" just as the Mississippi Gulf Coast is very much a part of our world. If you remember what happened in Monterey as a result of the tornado we had and then imagine that occurring throughout the entire southern half of the Berkshires with lesser damage radiating out for over one hundred miles then you will have some idea of what has occurred in my home region. As one of my sister's friends who was a first responder for Katrina said, "Compared to Katrina, our experience with Ivan was a cakewalk."

Now as I write this we are anticipating the effects of Hurricane Rita. No matter the scientific arguments or political negligence, I can tell you that in my fifty-six years I have never seen anything like this. The loss of lives both human and animal, the loss of history and culture in the buildings that are destroyed and people who are displaced, and the loss of ancient oaks, tall pines, and other aspects of the natural world is heartbreaking.

I appreciate the many friends in the Berkshires who have contacted me to ask what they can do. I have started an email Hurricane list for people who want to give directly to those in need. My family and friends on the Gulf Coast who are either doing relief work or who have lost homes and suffered damage are in constant contact with me, keeping me up to date with events. As a result I am amassing a list of places that I know personally where people can send either items or money or volunteer. The local churches and civic organizations on the Gulf Coast are doing a tremendous job of providing hurricane relief, and many of them have put up web sites that tell some pretty amazing stories. Anyone who would like to be on the list can email me at nickyheron@att.net to receive updates and information.

I would particularly like to thank Rev. Liz Goodman and the Monterey UCC for their constant open door. We have been collecting items there and using it as a place to sort and pack boxes. Monterey is very fortunate to have an active church and they deserve our continued financial support as well. I would also like to thank Alice O. Howell and the members of the Prayer Breakfast Group who have donated and been so supportive. I know other people in Monterey who have family and friends in the affected areas and I'm sure I speak for all of us when I say how much it means to see such generosity and care.

It's not easy to be so far away at a time like this, and at least we can give some immediate help by donating and volunteering. I will be going to the Gulf Coast sometime before Thanksgiving to stay for several months, and anyone who would like to come down for a week or two to volunteer in the area can also get in touch with me. I will be more than happy to put you in touch with local organizations and help you find places to stay.

Thanks again to all for the tremendous support. It means a lot.

— Nicky Hearon Brown

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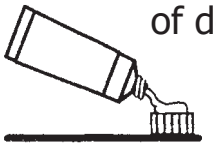

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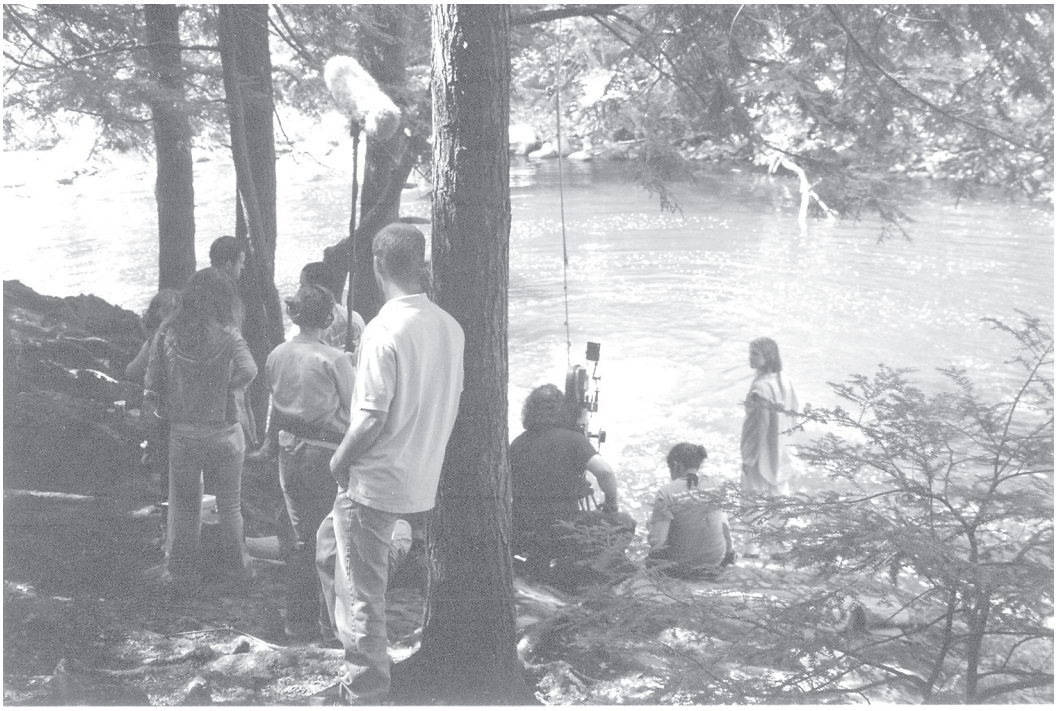
We Are Not Afraid

To the Editor:

I am just back from the latest peace demonstration in Washington, DC. The first thing people ask is, "Well? How many people were there?" Sheesh—I was only in town for twelve hours, not quite enough time to take a count and check my work. Must be the turnout gives credibility, like polling figures. Someone suggested it would be a simple matter to sit on the curb and count the number across the street, then go for fifty on the other axis, check the time and do the math. Maybe so, but it wasn't how I spent the day.



Will Marsh

In the dog days of August a film crew from New York City took over the swimming hole on River Road for two days to film scenes for a short independent production. Other scenes were filmed in a motel in Copake and in downtown Millertown. The producers say that they intend to take the finished film, tentatively entitled "Leaving Gussie," on the festival circuit.

First thing I did was to visit Camp Casey. You could tell it had been long days and nights in a Texas ditch plus a month on the road all over the country, finally landing near the Washington Monument, with its tents, rows of crosses, photos, flowers, vets, and Goldstar Families. This was 7:00 a.m., quiet time: a good start to a full day. Later there were puppets, dogs, kids on parents' shoulders, draped coffins, drummers, Quakers in purple shirts, Service Employees Union members in purple shirts, guys in leather, old people in wheelchairs, young people in wheelchairs, skinny people, fat people, middle people, and all colors of people. There was laughing, crying, sleeping, praying, ranting, and being quiet. We walked up to the White House and saw a lot of uniformed officers in black. They would tell you where the subway was if you asked. There was a uniformed officer in blue who said I could go back the way I'd come but he hated to send me back to where all the protesters were. I said, "Why not? I'm not afraid of them—I AM a protester." Rubber sandals, backpack, poncho, peace buttons. Did he think I was White House staff?

I saw friends from home and gave them carrots from my lunch. I heard Jesse Jackson and Ramsey Clark, and of course Cindy Sheehan. There was all sorts of music, I collected literature and a few new buttons, I saw fabulous signs and silly ones: "Bush bin Lyin'." I felt all sorts of emotions from the crowd, like determination, solidarity, distress, confidence, big anger. I bought a bumper sticker that says "9/11 was an inside job, our nation is in peril" because I have come to believe that this is so. I sang "We are not afraid" with the purple-shirted Quakers because standing with them there in the light drizzle, I found I was not afraid. That's what I brought home. If I could, I would pass it out, especially to the people who are so eager for numbers. It WAS a huge crowd, but the main thing was that in spite of everything that has been going down lately, it was a crowd that was not afraid.

— Bonner McAllester

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Monterey Community Center Goings On

One thing that brings me endless delight is similarity between things that are seemingly quite dissimilar. It happens all the time in nature; shapes repeat themselves across the board. This past winter a c-section was performed on one of our goats, and for the first time I was privileged to see a uterus from the outside. With two kids in it, it was the shape of the head of a big-horned sheep.

In these articles about the goings on of the Friends of Wilson McLaughlin House (FWMH), I have often drawn parallels between business here at the farm and the business we tend to at these Community Center meetings. Being a creature of habit, as you can see, I now naturally swing right into it when I sit down to write this column.

Every ten days for the past six weeks here at Rawson Brook Farm, we have been releasing tiny parasitic wasps that are sent to us (not quite hatched) by Johnnie in Texas. It is part of our farm effort to reduce the fly population with natural predators. We never see them and they don't sting. Although I certainly know better, when I first signed up for a season of shipments I thought we'd just release them and see how they did, and that would be that. Similarly, when I signed up to be on the Wilson McLaughlin House Committee, I thought I'd go to some meetings and that would be that.

As you can guess, the release of these little insects is just part of the picture. We have to tend to many details if they are to have half a chance to work (just like working on the Community Center project). For example, their placement is crucial: not in direct sun, not where it's too wet, not where the wild turkeys will scratch and eat them, and, most importantly, within one hundred feet of all the places we think the flies pupate. We had to set aside all notions of yickiness and go forth in search of all such locations around the farm. (Information gathering and networking are crucial. The FWMH spends hours debating the pros and cons of each step we take; we want to get it right.) And the wasp directions stress not to start distributing them before they start to hatch: wait until forty to fifty of the little creatures have emerged from the paper bag. I, of course, want to put them out the minute they arrive in the mail. (Fundraising 101 says don't jump the gun. Prepare, cultivate, patience, patience. Everything in good time.)

There were twelve pages of things we had to know about to do a good job with our wasps. The things we are learning on the Wilson House Committee are endless. Our weekly meetings have stretched to three and a half hours, and there is homework. We are still tending to some of the things we were working on last month.

• With help of Town Counsel, we are getting the wording on the lease agreement just right.

• In the September News our wish list asked for a graphic designer and Kip Beacco stepped forward to help with our preliminary brochure.

• We also wished for some fundraising help, and Nora Hayes stepped forward to volunteer her expertise in grant writing.

• Most excitedly, we are applying for our first grant! It is a small start-up-type grant seemingly designed just for our situation.

And the Monterey Community Center Web site, www.ccmonterey.org, is under construction.

— Susan Sellew

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The Observer
August 26–September 25

High temp. (9/13, 14)	83°
Low temp. (9/25)	40°
Avg. high temp.	74.5°
Avg. low temp.	52.8°
Avg. temp.	63.7°
Total rainfall	2.11 in.

Precipitation occurred on 10 days.

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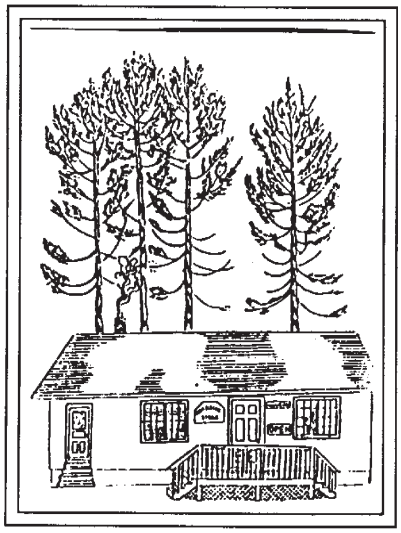

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